



## **Blessed Communion**

Maundy Thursday

# **BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH | York, Nebraska**

*April 6, 2023*

## **SERIES THEME: OUR GREATEST NEEDS**

What do you really need right now? To answer that question, one must first define what a “need” is. We understand that a “need” is greater than a “want.” If you lack something you want, life goes on just fine. If you lack something you need, that presents a problem. Thus, to correctly answer that question, “What do you really need right now,” ultimately one must understand their greatest problems. Mankind’s greatest problems are universal. We all live under the curse of sin. That sin makes us utterly helpless in our natural state. Natural man is confused, unable to make sense of life. Left in sin, man is doomed to death, and not just physical death. After one’s heart stops comes another type of death that is infinitely worse, an eternal nightmare. Lent is the season of the Church Year where we wrestle with our greatest needs. Lent also demonstrates that in Christ, all our greatest needs are met. Here is what the Spirit makes clear this season. If you lack Christ, you have nothing. If you have Christ, you have everything you truly need.

## **THEME OF THE DAY: BLESSED COMMUNION**

We often think of the word communion as a synonym for the Lord’s Supper. “I took communion” means “I received the Lord’s Supper.” Yet, the Latin word communionis means “community” or “association” or “sharing.” (In the creed, we speak of “the communion of saints.”) When people come together and share their lives with one another, the result is blessing—a blessed communion. And when God comes to us and shares himself with us, the result is eternal life. But is that really possible? How can a holy God associate with people who sin every day? In a miraculous meal, God lets us share in his own flesh and blood, the very blood that was shed to atone for our sin. We celebrate this feast for the forgiveness of sins and restored unity with our Father—a blessed communion with God. But there’s more! As we share this meal together, the Lord who loved us unites us in love for one another—a blessed communion with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Community is often celebrated with food. When people love one another, they enjoy gathering around the dinner table. On this Holy Thursday, Jesus invites us to his table. He serves us Supper. He serves us himself. And in doing so, Jesus creates a blessed communion.

**Worship Leader**

Pastor Justin Wilkens

**Organist/Pianist**

Quinton Corwin

## **Acknowledgments**

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## HOLY THURSDAY CONFESSIONAL RITE

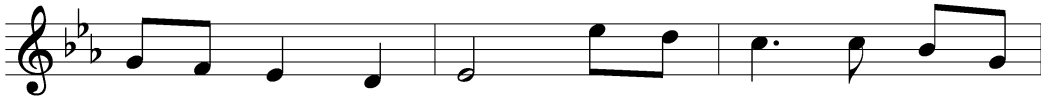
### Hymn: 416 When You Woke That Thursday Morning



1 When you woke that Thurs - day morn - ing, Sav - ior, teach - er,  
2 Nev - er so a - lone and lone - ly, long - ing with tor -  
3 What was there that you could give them that would nev - er  
4 One in faith, in love u - nit - ed, all one bod - y,  
5 One day all the Church will cap - ture that bright vi - sion



faith - ful friend, thoughts of self and safe - ty scorn - ing, know - ing  
ment - ed heart to be with your dear ones on - ly for a  
be out - spent, what great gift that would out - live them, what last  
you the head, when we meet, by you in - vit - ed, you are  
glo - ri - ous, and your saints will know the rap - ture that your



how the day would end; Lamb of God, fore - told for  
qui - et hour a - part: sin - less Lamb and fall - en  
will and tes - ta - ment? "Show me and the world you  
with us, as you said. One with you and one an -  
heart de - sired for us, when the longed - for peace and



a - ges, now at last the hour had come when but One could  
crea - ture, one last pas - chal meal to eat, one last les - son  
love me, know me as the Lamb of God: do this in re -  
oth - er in a u - ni - ty sub - lime, see in us your  
un - ion of the great - est and the least meet in joy - ous,



pay sin's wa - ges: you as - sumed their dread - ful sum.  
as their teach - er, wash - ing your dis - ci - ples' feet.  
mem-brance of me, eat this bod - y, drink this blood."  
sis - ter, broth - er, one in ev - 'ry place and time.  
blest com - mun - ion in your nev - er - end - ing feast.

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## *Stand*

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## **Confession**

Brothers and sisters in Christ, in this Lenten season we have heard again how our Lord walked the path of suffering which led him to the cross for our salvation. We have also heard our Lord's call to intensify our struggle against sin, death, and the devil—all that keeps us from loving God and one another. This is the struggle to which we were committed at Baptism; God's forgiveness and the power of his Spirit to amend our lives continue with us because of his love for us in Jesus our Savior.

Within the family of the Church, God never wearies of giving peace and new life. In the absolution, we receive forgiveness as from God himself. This absolution we should not doubt but firmly believe that our sins are thus forgiven before God in heaven, for it comes to us in the name and by the command of our Lord.

We who receive God's love in Jesus Christ are called to love one another, to be servants to each other, as Jesus became our servant.

In Holy Communion, first instituted on this night, the members of Christ's body participate most intimately in his love. Remembering our Lord's Last Supper with his disciples, we eat the bread and drink the cup of this meal. Together we receive the Lord's gift of his body and blood for forgiveness and participate in that new covenant that makes us one with him and one another. The Lord's Supper is the promise of the great banquet we will share with all the

faithful when our Lord returns, the joyous culmination of our reconciliation with God and each other.

As we begin the solemn celebration of our Lord's passion, let us confess our sins to him, receive his absolution, and be reconciled to God and each other in Christian love.

**Holy God, gracious Father,**

**I am sinful by nature**

**and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.**

**I have not loved you with my whole heart;**

**I have not loved others as I should.**

**I deserve your punishment both now and forever.**

**But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins**

**with his innocent suffering and death.**

**Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

*Silence for meditation and reflection*

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ has forgiven us, has reconciled us to God, and has promised us the power to forgive and love one another. Relying on his promise, therefore, be reconciled with one another.

**Brothers and sisters, may the peace of Christ rule in our hearts, in our words, and in our actions.**

## **THE WORD**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

## Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, in the Sacrament of Holy Communion, you give us your true body and blood as a remembrance of your suffering and death on a cross. Grant us so firmly to believe your words and promise that we may always partake of this sacrament to our eternal good; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*Be seated*

## First Reading

*Exodus 24:1–11*

*Israel had promised to obey God's Law. They did not. So how were these lawbreakers able to commune with a holy God? They were sprinkled with the blood of the covenant.*

<sup>1</sup> Then the Lord said to Moses, "Come up to the Lord, you and Aaron, along with Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship me from a distance. <sup>2</sup> Only Moses is allowed to come near the Lord, but the others are not to come near, and the people are not to go up with him."

<sup>3</sup> Moses came and reported to the people all the words of the Lord and all the ordinances. Then all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words which the Lord has spoken we will do." <sup>4</sup> Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord.

He got up early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain. He set up twelve memorial stones for the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>5</sup> He sent young Israelite men, who offered whole burnt offerings and sacrificed fellowship offerings of cattle to the Lord. <sup>6</sup> Moses took half of the blood and put it in bowls, and he splashed half of the blood on the altar. <sup>7</sup> He took the Book of the Covenant and read it out loud to the people and they said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do. We will obey."

<sup>8</sup> Moses took the blood and splashed it on the people. He said, "Look, here is the blood of the covenant, which the Lord made with you by means of all these words."

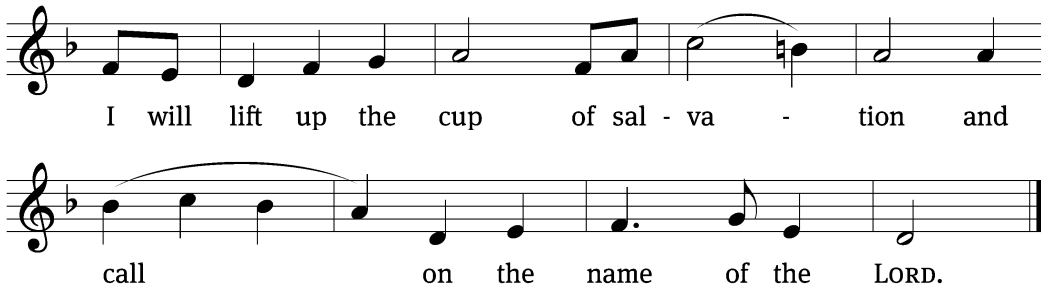
<sup>9</sup> Then Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up. <sup>10</sup> They saw the God of Israel. Under his feet they saw what looked like a pavement of sapphire as clear as the sky. <sup>11</sup> The Lord did not lay his hand on the dignitaries of the people of Israel. They gazed at God, and they ate and drank.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm of the Day: 116A I Will Lift Up the Cup of Salvation

### Refrain



### Tone



I love the LORD, for he / heard my voice;  
he heard my cry for / mercy.  
Because he turned his / ear to me,  
I will call on him as long / as I live.  
For you, LORD, have delivered / me from death,  
my eyes from tears, my feet from / stumbling,  
that I may walk be- / fore the LORD  
in the land of the / living. *Refrain*

What shall I return / to the LORD  
for all his good- / ness to me?  
I will lift up the cup of sal- / vation  
and call on the name / of the LORD.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son  
and to the Holy / Spirit,  
as it was in the be- / ginning,  
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain***

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## Second Reading

1 Corinthians 11:23–28

*St. Paul maintains that every time we celebrate the sacrament we feast on the flesh and blood of God for the forgiveness of sins and restored unity with our Father.*

<sup>23</sup> For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed, took bread, <sup>24</sup> and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." <sup>25</sup> In the same way, after the meal, he also took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new testament in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." <sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

<sup>27</sup> Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the Lord's body and blood. <sup>28</sup> Instead, let a person examine himself and after doing so, let him eat of the bread and drink from the cup.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

## Gospel Acclamation

John 13:1



*Refrain*



Glo - ry, praise, and hon - or to you, Lord Je - sus Christ.

*Tone*



*Refrain*

Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

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## Gospel

John 13:1–15,34

*Just as Christ loved us with service and sacrifice, so he commands us to love one another as part of a blessed communion.*

<sup>1</sup> Before the Passover Festival, Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved those who were his own in the world, he loved them to the end.

<sup>2</sup> By the time the supper took place, the Devil had already put the idea into the heart of Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus.

<sup>3</sup> Jesus knew that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God. <sup>4</sup> He got up from the supper and laid aside his outer garment. He took a towel and tied it around his waist. <sup>5</sup> Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

<sup>6</sup> He came to Simon Peter, who asked him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

<sup>7</sup> Jesus answered him, "You do not understand what I am doing now, but later you will understand."

<sup>8</sup> Peter told him, "You will never, ever, wash my feet!"

Jesus replied, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with me."

<sup>9</sup> "Lord, not just my feet," Simon Peter replied, "but also my hands and my head!"

<sup>10</sup> Jesus told him, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet, but his body is completely clean. And you are clean, but not all of you." <sup>11</sup> Indeed, he knew who was going to betray him. That is why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

<sup>12</sup> After Jesus had washed their feet and put on his outer garment, he reclined at the table again. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. <sup>13</sup> "You call me Teacher and Lord. You are right, because I am. <sup>14</sup> Now if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup> Yes, I have given you an example so that you also would do just as I have done for you.

<sup>34</sup> "A new commandment I give you: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, so also you are to love one another.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

*Be seated*

## Hymn of the Day: 659 Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior

sts. 1–6



1 Je - sus Christ, our bless - ed Sav - ior, turned a - way God's  
2 As his pledge of love un - dy - ing, he, this pre - cious  
3 Je - sus here him - self is shar - ing; take heed how you  
4 Use - less would be Je - sus' pas - sion if sal - va - tion



wrath for - ev - er; by his bit - ter grief and woe  
food sup - ply - ing, gives his bod - y with the bread  
are pre - par - ing, for if you do not be - lieve,  
you could fash - ion. Do not come if you sup - pose



he saved us from the e - vil foe.  
and with the wine the blood he shed.  
judg - ment in - stead you shall re - ceive.  
you need not him who died and rose.

5 Christ says, "Come, all you that labor,  
and receive my grace and favor;  
those who feel no pain or ill  
need no physician's help or skill."

6 Then hold fast with faith unshaken  
that this food is to be taken  
by the souls who are distressed,  
by hearts that long for peace and rest.

Text: tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941; German version, Martin Luther, 1483–1546, abr.; John Hus, c. 1369–1415  
Tune: Geistliche Lieder aufs new gebessert, Wittenberg, 1533, ed. Joseph Klug, alt.  
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## Sermon

*Stand*

## **Nicene Creed**

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is,  
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one being with the Father.**

**Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,  
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.**

**He suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.**

**He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who in unity with the Father and the Son  
is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

*Be seated*

## Prayer of the Church

Lord Jesus, you are the Lamb of God, pictured in the ancient Passover feast, now giving your own body and pouring out your own blood in Holy Communion. Just as the Passover lambs assured the Israelites of God's promise to deliver them from death,

**strengthen our belief that the bread is your real body and the wine is your real blood, given to us for our forgiveness, life, and salvation.**

Prepare us to receive this sacrament remembering your death and repenting of our sins.

**Unite us by our oneness of faith throughout this congregation and our synod, and love us to the end that we may love others as you have loved us.**

We rejoice in our fellow believers who have been instructed in your Word and confirmed in the Lutheran faith, who are now ready to receive Holy Communion.

**Equip them with every spiritual blessing for doing your will.**

We pray for those absent from the sacrament because of their own neglect.

**Call them in your mercy to return and renew their faith.**

Keep in your care those unable to receive the sacrament often because they are homebound, hospitalized, imprisoned, serving in the military, or otherwise separated from the fellowship of believers. Encourage them so that they do not lose hope.

**Be gracious to us all and nourish us with this feast, that we remain faithful unto death, and become partakers of the wedding feast of the Lamb. Amen.**

## Offering

### Offering Hymn: 417 It Was a Dark and Dismal Night

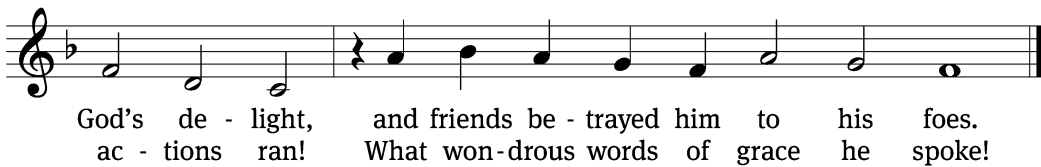
*sts. 1-2*



1 It was a dark and dis - mal night when pow'rs of  
2 Be - fore the mourn - ful scene be - gan, he took the



earth and hell a - rose a - gainst the Son, our  
bread and blessed and broke. What love through all his



Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, abr., alt. Tune: Louis Bourgeois, c. 1510–c. 1561 Text and tune: Public domain

## THE SACRAMENT

*Stand*

### Preface

CW 165

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

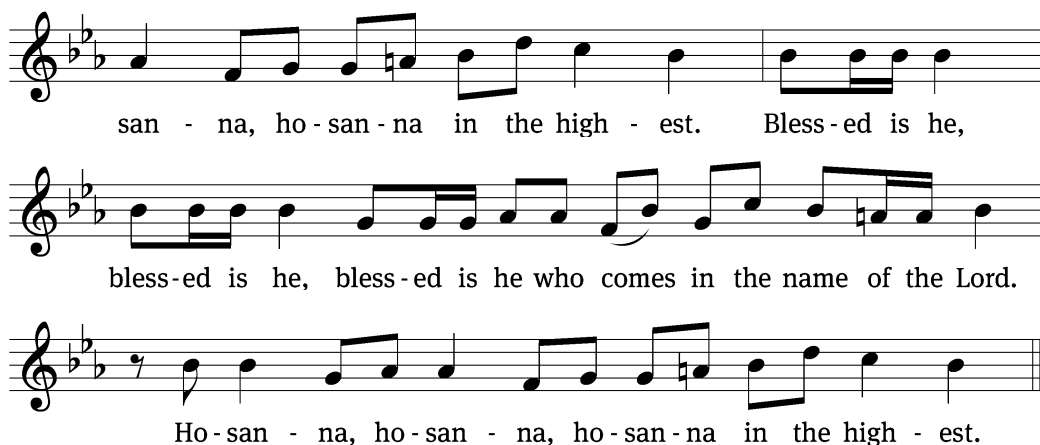
**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who brought the gift of salvation to all people by his death on the tree of the cross so that the devil, who overcame us by a tree, would in turn by a tree be overcome. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

### Holy, Holy, Holy

CW 167





## Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through him you made all things; in him you are well pleased. He is the incarnate Word, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, he stretched out his hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you.

As we remember Jesus' death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son's body and blood. Send us your Spirit, unite us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

## Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;**

**and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom  
and the power and the glory  
forever and ever. Amen.**

## **Words of Institution**

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my + body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

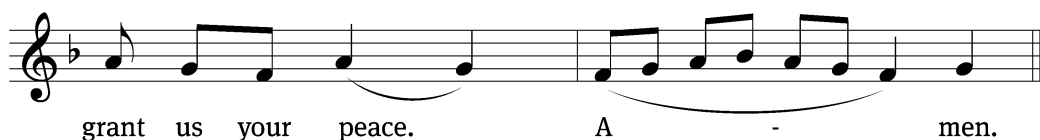
Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my + blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**Amen.**

## **O Christ, Lamb of God**

*CW 169*

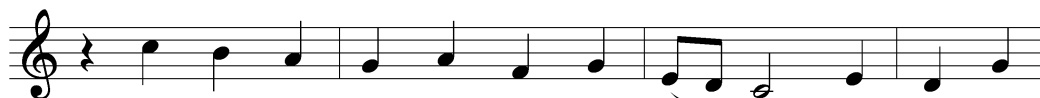
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;  
have mer-cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God,  
you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.  
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;



*Be seated*

## Distribution

### Distribution Hymn: 670 I Come, O Savior, to Your Table



- 1 I come, O Sav - ior, to your ta - ble, for weak and
- 2 O grant that I in man - ner wor - thy may eat and
- 3 I should not be your sheep, dear Sav - ior; I stray in
- 4 O let me loathe all sin for - ev - er as death and



wea - ry is my soul; O Je - sus, you a -  
 drink and be re - stored, and, dwell - ing on your  
 sin's ac - cursed ter - rain. And yet you par - don  
 poi - son to my soul, that I through will - ful



lone are a - ble to sat - is - fy and make me whole.  
 bound - less mer - cy, look on - ly un - to you, O Lord.  
 my be - hav - ior; my faith - ful Shep - herd you re - main.  
 sin - ning nev - er may see your judg - ment take its toll!

#### *Refrain*



Lord, may your bod - y and your blood be for my soul the high - est good.



- 5 Your holy heart has one obsession,  
one blessed thing it burns to do—  
to cleanse the sinner from transgression;  
so I, a sinner, come to you. (Refrain)
- 6 My soul is burdened; Lord, relieve me,  
by all this weight of sin oppressed!  
Though sinful, yet, in grace receive me  
and feed me as your grateful guest. (Refrain)
- 7 Within me, Lord, your vision traces  
a heart of deep humility  
that mourns its sin and yet embraces  
the merit you have earned for me. (Refrain)
- 8 By faith I call your holy table  
the testament of your deep love,  
for by your gift I now am able  
to know the heart of God above. (Refrain)
- 9 This meal with blessing is abounding:  
to poor ones wealth, to weak ones pow'r,  
to angels joy, to hell confounding,  
and life for me in death's dark hour. (Refrain)
- 10 My heart has now become your dwelling,  
O blessed, holy Trinity.  
With angels I, your praises telling,  
shall live in joy eternally. (Refrain)

Text: Friedrich C. Heyder, 1677–1754, abr.; (sts. 1, Ref, 2, 4, 8–10): tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941; (sts. 3, 5–7): tr. Michael D. Schultz, b. 1963  
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### *Stand*

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
**his mercy endures forever.**

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,  
**we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

**Amen.**

## **Hymn: 927 Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing**



1 Lord, dis - miss us with your bless - ing; fill our hearts with  
2 Thanks we give and ad - o - ra - tion for the gos - pel's  
3 So when - e'er the sig - nal's giv - en us from earth to



joy and peace. Let us each, your love pos - sess - ing,  
joy - ful sound; may the fruits of your sal - va - tion  
call a - way, borne on an - gels' wings to heav - en,



tri - umph in re - deem - ing grace. O re - fresh us,  
in our hearts and lives a - bound! Ev - er faith - ful,  
glad the sum - mons to o - bey, may we ev - er,

O re-fresh us, trav - 'ling through this wil - der - ness.  
ev - er faith - ful to your truth may we be found.  
may we ev - er reign with Christ in end - less day.

Text: attr. John Fawcett, 1740–1817, alt. Tune: Henry T. Smart, 1813–1879 Text and tune: Public domain

THIS IS MY  
BODY  
THIS IS MY  
BLOOD

